

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 11-41 were pending in the application.

Claims 2, 4, 6, 8, and 16-41 were allowed.

Claims 12-15 were objected to.

Claims 1 and 11 were rejected.

Claims 1 and 11 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 12 has been amended.

Reconsideration and allowance of claims 2, 4, 6, 8, and 12-41 is respectfully requested in view of the following.

The Objection to Claims 12-15:

Claims 12-15 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Accordingly, claim 12 has been presented in independent form. Consequently, claim 12 now presents allowable subject matter. Furthermore, for at least the same reasons, claims 13-15, which depend from claim 12, also now present allowable subject matter.

The Allowance of Claims 2, 4, 6, 8, and 16-41:

The Applicant notes with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter for claims 2, 4, 6, 8, and 16-41.

Unless stated otherwise, none of the amendments to the claims were made for reasons substantially related to the statutory requirements for patentability.

Furthermore, unless stated otherwise, the amendment to the claims were made to simply make express what had been implicit in the claims as originally worded and therefore is not a narrowing amendment that would create any type of prosecution history estoppel.

In addition, to the extent that formerly dependent claims have been amended to present them in independent form, such amendments do not limit the scope of the doctrine of equivalents for any of the elements of such amended claims. Rather, because dependent claims incorporate the limitations of the claims from which they depend, such amendments merely present the subject matter of the dependent claim in an equivalent form.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are drawn to novel subject matter, patentably distinguishable over the prior art of record. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to reconsider and allow claims presented for reconsideration herein. To the extent that the present amendment results in additional fees, the Applicant authorizes the Commissioner to charge deposit account no. 08-1394, order no. 25791.7.02.

Should the Examiner deem that any further amendment is desirable to place this application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: _____

9/10/04

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